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Bishop Von Galen Defies Hitler

The following article was written by a former German judge and a noted Catholic, who fled from his country to England to escape capture by the Gestapo. Reprinted from the CATHOLIC TIMES, London.

WESTPHALIA is the heavy industries district of the Ruhr, one of forges and chimneys. But that is only true of the south-western part of the province. Large areas, especially around the capital, Muenster, are predominantly agricultural, and there lives a population of a proud and entirely Catholic yeomanry.

The Westphalians are well-known in Germany for their conservatism and their individualism. They take a long time to become friends with other people, but once friends they are most reliable ones. There are scarcely even villages in the "Muensterland," every farm being its own area, with the farmhouse surrounded by fields and meadows, and every field enclosed by hedges and walls. In no part of Germany is the idea that one's house is one's castle so strongly manifest as in Westphalia.

In this wide, flat landscape there lives among the farmfolk a proud gentry of oldest stock, little intermixed with non Westphalian families. Some have vast estates around their old castles. These castles, still surrounded with walls and moats, have been the cradles

of many famous German Catholics, influential in public life. They have been described in the poems of the profound German poetess, Annette von Droste-Hülshoff, who flourished in the middle of the last century.

The Droste and the Galen are two of the most distinguished families of this type.

A FAMOUS FAMILY

In 1650, when Muenster was still the seat of a bishopric that was at the same time the princely government of the diocese, Christopher Bernard von Galen ascended the See of Münster. He was one of the best-known princes of that time, equally noted as a bishop, and administrator and a valiant warrior who fought, with other German princes, the Turks and the Swedes. His epitaph is "a Catholic reformer of the 17th Century." Since then many a member of this family has held the high clerical ranks of Western Germany.

It is said that Clemens August Count Galen, when elected Bishop of Münster—the man who is now one of the outstanding personalities of German Catholicism—mentioned to his friends: "We Galens are not very prominent people. We are neither diplomats, nor generals, nor scientists, nor especially wealthy. But one thing we are—stubborn Catholics."

Since then he has had ample scope for proving his strength, the fighting qualities of his personality and the leadership of his flock.

VALIANT OPPONENT OF NAZISM

The heresy of Nazism—so strongly rejected by the entire German Hierarchy—has found no more valiant resistance than from the Bishop of Münster, though after all he is only one of the twenty-five or so German Bishops under the six German Archbishops.

In 1934, one year after Nazism had overthrown all other powers, he started the counter-attack. Rosenberg—the chief cultural adviser of Hitler—and his

book, *Myth of the Twentieth Century*, were the immediate objectives. The ultimate goal, of course, was the clarification of the anti-Christian, anti-human and anti-Catholic world of Nazidom, camouflaged by scribbling writers with a semi-scientific attitude which covered their absolute ignorance and arrogance.

Some famous Catholic scientists had scrutinized the pamphlet of Rosenberg which was forced upon the schools as a text-book. They had not only found out an immense number of errors, misunderstandings and platitudes which were sufficient to discredit Rosenberg as a writer; they had also discovered that Rosenberg partly relied on a once well-known historian who, in his old age, had become mentally ill, and had yet written a book which was clearly the work of a deranged mind. This book was the "scientific" root of Rosenberg's attacks against the Pope! And no publisher was able or willing to take the risk of printing a book so clearly steeped in the nonsense of a member of the Nazi Government.

CAMPAIGN AGAINST ROSENBERG

But as for Bishop Galen! By a clause of the Concordat, publications to the clergy by the Bishops were free from censorship. The *Anti-Rosenberg* (a book of more than 200 pages) was published as an "official supplement" to the *Gazette* for the diocese of Münster in October, 1934. Soon this "supplement" sold separately in bookshops and newspaper stalls all over Germany and became a best-seller.

Rosenberg answered in a pamphlet—again he was answered by the Catholics. Nowadays nobody in Germany believes him to be an earnest author—except, of course, for some ignorant Nazis.

The Bishop's preface to the book reads as follows:

To the Reverend Clergy we give herewith a document in which German scientific experts disprove the contents and the sources of the book, *Myth of the Twentieth Century*. This booklet is written in the love

of our German fatherland, of the Holy Church and of Truth. May it work in that sense.

The Nazis raged, especially as they could not attack the real authors. They called them cowards who were hiding behind the authority of the Bishop. One of the writers even told us of the difficulties in paying income tax from his royalties! But the book was published again and again, and the other Bishops, too, soon had the weapon of the "supplement" to their Gazettes.

TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

The fight became successful. In Cloppenburg, a market town in the diocese of Münster, the Nazis tried to take the Cross from the schools and the classrooms. This act was answered by the first real riots against the Nazis. The farmers and farmhands, the craftsmen and the civil servants of the district marched in procession to the schools and the Nazi offices. Even some Catholics who had become Nazis joined the demonstration. The Nazis gave in. The Cross was reinstalled.

The news of this incident spread like wildfire through Catholic Germany, helping immensely to stir up resistance everywhere. But there were doubts. Of course, no paper, no broadcast mentioned the facts. Were the rumors true and not merely gossip? Again Bishop Galen showed the way. He wrote a letter of congratulation to the administrator of this part of his diocese, mentioning every fact extensively—and again he published this letter in his *Gazette*. Copies of the letter, printed, duplicated, typewritten, went from hand to hand, the story from mouth to mouth. We rejoiced. Resistance helped once—it shall and will help in the long run.

IN THE FRONT LINE

The Bishop placed himself in the front line. Again and again he stood in the pulpit, unwaveringly telling the facts, and giving the Church's answer. He did

so especially when high Nazi officials visited his capital.

When Goebbels, whose small, crippled body is so ridiculous an advertisement of the Nazi creed of the beauty and strength of the so-called "Nordic Race," had a big rally in Münster, the Bishop, who is extremely tall, led a grand procession over Münster's wonderful old market-place. He wore a very high mitre and so looked still taller—so providing striking evidence that the racial virtues—so far as they exist at all—were to be found in the Roman prelate and not in the "Shrivelled Teuton," as Goebbels is nicknamed.

As I know by personal experience, the house of the Bishop is open to everyone who has to report important matters to him. He himself receives visitors without any ceremony. He knows his flock and they know him.

Now he has become a famous personality all over the Catholic globe. Everyone knows about his sermons and his fortitude. But there is one thing which can't be overlooked.

He could not fight this struggle if he stood alone. He is only the exponent of the stubbornly Catholic people of Westphalia, whether they are farmers, or townsfolk, or miners or furnace-workers.

Nation in Decay

Editorial reprinted from the LEADER, Dublin.

THE somewhat belated appearance of the General Report on the Census of 1936, which was issued a couple of weeks ago, serves once again to remind us that this is still a nation in decay and that vigorous new policies are needed if the rot is to be stopped and a period of new growth inaugurated. It is true that in the decennial period 1926-1936 the aggregate population declined only by a total of 3,572, a much smaller loss than had been revealed by any other Census since

1841. But a closer examination of the petition indicates that no comfort can be taken from the smallness of the loss of population in the ten years after 1926.

We may ignore the undoubted fact that, after the stoppage of the American avenue of emigration, it was some time before those who had been inclined to leave the country for the west were able to make up their minds to go east, with the result that a purely fortuitous and very temporary slackening of the outward human flow from this country occurred, making the total figures of the 1926 Census give an unduly optimistic picture of population trends. If we look below the totals to the details, we shall find enough ground for alarm without reflecting that the general position is worse than shown by the figures. The really serious fact that comes out is that, whereas during the ten years from 1926 the total number of people in the country fell by the relatively insignificant figure of 3,572, the number of children not exceeding fourteen years of age fell by no less than 47,485. That the fall in the number of children is becoming progressively worse is indicated by the fact that the fall in number of those aged 6 to 13, the years in which school attendance is compulsory, is only 18,757, as against a decline of 28,726 in the number of those aged 0 to 5.

These figures corroborate those to which we have drawn attention in previous issues, showing that we are fast approaching a period in which, unless revolutionary changes take place, our numbers will continue to decline even if emigration should entirely cease. Now, it is obvious that if any substantial further fall in our numbers should take place, the already rather meager market for which some of our factories have to cater will shrink to such a point that industries will gradually collapse, causing new waves of emigration and a still more accentuated population shrinkage. Unless the situation is more vigorously handled than it has been up to date, there is every reason to fear that by

the end of the century the population of the twenty-six counties will have fallen to a million or less. It is unnecessary for us to enlarge on the disastrous consequences of such a catastrophic fall in numbers.

Twenty-Five Years of Uncontrol

EDGAR SCHMIEDELER, O.S.B.

Reprinted from the Acolyte, November, 1942.

A society that claims to be civilized and yet allows the sex instinct free play is inoculating itself with a virus of corruption which sooner or later will destroy it. It is only a question of time.—Jean Violet.

BIRTH control does not stand alone. It is but one of many forms of uncontrol, all closely linked and interrelated. Nor do declining birthrates and declining populations stand alone. They are but one part of the picture. Other parts show a decadent nation, a deeply immoral society, a selfish and undisciplined people. Or, as the author stated it elsewhere, our overall picture "shows the vicious, debilitating cancer of artificial birth control slowly draining away the vital powers of the people. It shows moral laxity, stamping in the spirit of self-indulgence, leading to the shirking of hardship and self-restraint, producing a softness and deterioration that must prove suicidal to the individual and the nation. It shows the decay as well as the decline of America."¹

This is as much as to say that birth control is not something that stands entirely by itself. To be sure, it would be dreadful enough, both in itself and in its consequences, even at that. But it is, as a matter of fact, but a part of a much greater whole. And con-

1. *The Threat of American Decline*, N.C.W.C. publication, concluding paragraph.

sequently, too, its results are much more far-reaching than if it stood alone.

One cannot escape it, the family moral code is one. It, in turn, is linked inextricably with a whole philosophy of life, an entire system of ethics. Break down the moral code in regard to sex in one field, and the way is paved for infractions in other fields. Tear down a part of a system of morals and the whole system is weakened. Loosen one thread of the fabric and the whole garment speedily disintegrates. As we stated elsewhere:

Teach artificial birth control and, have no doubt about it, you will have an increase in the hideous practice of murdering the unborn child. That is plain as day in our own country. It is no less plain in other countries. Have birth control and you will have sterilization, one of the means of birth control. Have these things and you will multiply divorce, for they strike at the powerful natural bond of marriage, the child; they multiply childless and near-childless marriages. As has been repeatedly noted, 72 per cent of the divorces in the United States are granted to childless couples. Furthermore, when matters have gone far enough, notions that were formerly only whispered about, notions about doing away with distinctions between legitimacy and illegitimacy, about permitting polygamous unions under certain circumstances—yes, notions of free love—will be spoken louder and louder. We repeat: the whole system, the entire moral code of the family is linked together. Reject a part of it and there is no logical stopping place. It should be added, too, that all such contagion spreads very easily today from one part of the country to another, for it is the day of the radio, and the movie, of the rostrum and the ubiquitous press.²

IMMORALITY CAMPAIGNED FOR

Another point that is deserving of emphasis here is the fact that violations of the moral code in respect to marriage and the family are today actually taught to the people. They are encouraged. They are urged as something good. They are campaigned for. Where formerly people were taught "Thou shalt not," today they are taught "Thou shalt." Infractions of the moral code of the family, therefore, are no longer merely

2. Edgar Schmiedeler, *A Leaf from the Marriage Encyclical*, an address given at the Convention of the Catholic Committee of the South, Richmond, Virginia, April 27, 1942.

matters of human weakness, of temptation. They are matters of deliberate acceptance, of the deliberate acceptance of both immoral doctrines and practices. They are matters of the deliberate rejection of traditional moral standards.

There is no longer any question that there are those in increasing numbers who uphold as lawful and right, practices contrary to the natural and Divine positive law regarding marriage. These deliberately accept, and even teach to others, what Pius XI in his Encyclical on *Christian Marriage* has called "the false principles of a new and utterly perverse morality," and carry them out in practice. There is no thought of guilt on their part, no acknowledgment of wrongdoing. Needless to say, this is all a different situation from that in which individuals lapsed morally, due to human weakness and the violence of passion, but admitted their guilt, and usually repented of it and strove to better themselves.

TWO VIEWS

Here then we have an entirely different ethic, a wholly different philosophy of life, from the traditional ethic and philosophy of the past. And the difference is very basic. According to many moderns, there is no question any longer of any norm of morality outside the individual. There is no question even of a rational or reasoned ethics. In the final analysis, the ultimate norm of right and wrong in the case of those who follow the new philosophy is simply desire, the whim of the moment, the enticement of animal instinct. Reason, the proper guiding factor in the realm of ethics for human beings, is dethroned. Indeed, man's higher faculties generally, his distinctly human qualities—the things that gradually lifted him from barbarism and that made possible for him a measure of progress and genuine civilization—are discounted as his moral guides. His animal tendencies are given first place

and made the basis of his conduct. Desire is sovereign. The barriers set up by rational civilized man of the past are levelled. Is it any wonder then that the flood has rushed in unchecked?

We have elsewhere broadly contrasted these two views, the old or traditional one, and the new, in the following words:

The one (the former) represents domination and guidance by reason, the other (the latter) by desire; the one represents the distinctly human in man, the other the animal in him; the one represents the spiritual and moral, the other the material and sensual; the one stands for selfish gratification, the other for social and human welfare; the one stands for a balanced control, the other for uncontrol; the one is based on the belief that man is destined to an external existence beyond the grave, the other on the belief that man ceases to exist with the death of his body.³

Many different harmful currents are found in the social *milieu* of the western world today, impelling the individual toward the new and away from the traditional view and ethic. Certainly outstanding among them are the following; an extreme Freudianism; a selfish individualism; a rank materialism; the general notion of free love; the utter disregard for modesty manifested in the cult of nudism; the degradation of the press, the stage and the cinema. These are all closely linked together. Some are no more than ramifications of others. All of them have, as a matter of fact, shown much growth in our midst. Emphasis upon one or the other seems to give an impetus to still others.

SPECIFIC FAMILY EVILS

A considerable number of specific family evils have resulted from the new philosophy and its various accompanying currents and ramifications. Perhaps the main ones, besides the now ubiquitous birth control, are the following: abortion, divorce, sterilization, a general

3. *A Holy War*, N.C.W.C. publication, Washington, D. C.

weakening, or even breakdown of sex morality, both inside and outside of marriage. One even hears at times today of the approval of concubinage or the acceptance of polygamy. And, let it be repeated here, these evils are closely linked together. To embrace one, means to accept the others as logical. Particularly is there no logical stopping place between them, once one has accepted sex as something to be separated in principle from the true purpose of marriage and to be made a mere means of gratification, as is so markedly true of birth control.

In the United States these matters are all verified by a multiplicity of facts. Attention has already been given to the evil of birth control, and the resultant birth rate, questions so intimately linked with the very survival of the nation. But what of the others? What, for instance, of abortion?

ABORTION

Here we find facts that are no less than staggering. They are facts that constitute a foul blot on the record of the American people. Like birth control, abortion or the killing of the unborn child has taken on shocking proportions. The same is true in other countries. The truth is, it has grown rapidly wherever the birth control movement has grown. "One cannot be surprised at this," says Paul Bureau, "and the silly (if made ignorantly) or lying assertions of all the neo-Malthusian propagandists will not alter the fact: The spread of anti-conceptionist practices is always accompanied by an increased number of abortions."

In great measure the practice of abortion is kept under cover, since for the most part it is a "racket." Yet, in spite of this, enough is known about it to make some reasonably reliable estimates about its extent. France, for instance, has long had an unenviable record in this regard. One estimate has placed the number within her borders in recent years at over one-half

million annually. In the case of pre-Hitler Germany, estimates ranging from 600,000 to 800,000 annually have been made by competent authorities. These same authorities conjecture that the measures taken against the practice by the government since 1934 have reduced the number by one-fourth or one-third. In Russia the Government for some years actually encouraged abortion by providing public abortoria. Still other countries have had similar sordid records so far as this practice is concerned.

In the case of our own country, perhaps the most acceptable estimate is that of Dr. Frederick J. Tausig, who places the annual number at 681,800 abortions adding, however, that "these figures are believed to be minimum." That they are indeed a minimum is easily believable when one recalls the cases of abortion "rackets" that occasionally come to light. A recent study in New York City gave as the lowest estimate for that city alone 100,000 cases a year. Some placed the estimate in this instance at 250,000. The "practitioners" were said to earn on the average of \$25,000 annually. Some individuals earned much more.

Apparently "illegal operations" are becoming so common, that some wish the field for "legal" ones expanded to offset the competition. At the meeting of the Birth Control Federation of America in New York in January, 1942, Dr. A. F. Guttmacher of Johns Hopkins suggested that the medical profession relax its barriers against therapeutic abortion, in order, as he put it, "to cheat the criminal abortionist." A lot of chance the helpless unborn babe has today!

The plainly obvious, namely that abortion is murder, the taking of innocent human life, a plain violation of the fifth commandment, need hardly be added here. The unborn child is fundamentally and essentially a human person, and as such has the full rights of a person, even though totally incapable of asserting and protecting those rights himself. And the right to life

is a most fundamental right. Undoubtedly many who are guilty of this practice, at the same time are definitely aware of its brutal injustice and the shocking moral wrong that it implies. But there are some, and even women among them, who pretend to justify the practice. Certainly it makes one conclude with Taine: "Whenever a man becomes a pagan, he finds himself licentious and hard."

DIVORCE

Again, there is the matter of divorce. Here, too, there is a close relationship with birth control and kindred evils. That divorce has grown very rapidly in recent decades there can be no question. And particularly has this been true among childless and near-childless couples. Several years ago, for instance, attention was drawn to the following case vouched for by Justice Harry F. Lewis of Brooklyn. In sixty-four undefended divorce cases heard by him in one day there was an average of only one child for every two families. The Judge noted further that most of the wives had had more husbands than children, and that their application for a new divorce was provoked by a desire to marry another husband whom they would not permit to become a father.⁴ Similar examples are not wanting. And presumably, at some American divorce mills, such as Reno, the example could be more than matched.

Not a few free-love theorists have openly spoken for divorce at will. Alfred Naquet, leader in the fight for the liberalization of divorce in France a generation ago, spoke openly for the very suppression of marriage. The cause of such extremists is greatly helped by those who speak for limited divorce. The fact is that once man-made divorce is accepted for any cause, there is no logical stopping place. Once the wedge has been inserted it drives deeper and deeper.

4. *A Catechism on Birth Control*, OUR SUNDAY VISITOR PRESS, p. 22. Huntington, Ind.

Conditions in our country in regard to this evil are truly shocking. The rapidity of the growth of divorce and its extent are almost incredible. A half century ago there were annually in the United States about 25,000 divorces. Even that was an unusually large number among the nations of the world at the time. But today the number has grown to fully 250,000 a year. Warnings of still further increases are appearing with increasing frequency since our entrance into the war. More than likely these warnings, and the facts on which they are based, are forerunners of what is to come in the decades ahead. We know that after the last World War divorce increased greatly in many countries of the world.

The following is another figure that bears careful examination: For the period, 1906-1936, there were 3,000,000 divorces in the United States. The annual average during that period was considerably less than the annual number the past few years. Yet at that, we say, there were in that short space of three decades 3,000,000 divorces—3,000,000 homes rent asunder, 6,000,000 dreams of marital bliss ended in disaster. What that means in terms of psychic scars, of hate and unhappiness, it may not be easy fully to appreciate. What it means in terms of juvenile delinquency, of ruined and distorted lives of American children who are denied a fundamental right, the right to a home and to a father and mother, is not easy to comprehend.

How very far this cancer of divorce has eaten into certain communities, certain particular parts of the body social, is suggested by the following example in the volume of the American Association of School Administrators, *Education for Family Life*. In one high school class consisting of twenty-two girls, seventeen came from homes broken by divorce.

In view of this situation there is small wonder indeed that Pope Pius XII wrote in his Encyclical, *To the Church in the United States*, issued on the occasion of

the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the American hierarchy: "Oh, if only your country had come to know from the experience of others rather than from examples at home of the accumulation of ills which derive from the plague of divorce."

Well, too, may Americans contemplate the words which His Holiness quoted in the same document from the Marriage Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII (*Arcanum*) written more than a half century before:

Because of divorce, the nuptial contract becomes subject to fickle whim; affection is weakened; pernicious incentives are given to conjugal infidelity; the care and education of offspring are harmed; easy opportunity is afforded for the breaking up of homes; the seeds of discord are sown among families; the dignity of woman is lessened and brought down and she runs the risk of being deserted after she has served her husband as an instrument of pleasure. And since it is true that for the ruination of the family and the undermining of the State nothing is so powerful as the corruption of morals, it is easy to see that divorce is of the greatest harm to the prosperity of families and of States.

CONCUBINAGE

An evil not entirely unrelated to others we have been discussing in this chapter is concubinage, cohabitation of men and women not legally married. Considering our moral conditions, one may not be surprised to learn that there is some concubinage in this country. But one might be very much surprised if he learned the full extent of it. That full extent is not generally known, if at all. But occasionally the veil is lifted sufficiently to give a fair idea of its extent. One such lifting of the veil took place almost two decades ago, made in a careful study by Dr. E. R. Mowrer, in a downtown rooming house area of one of our largest American cities. And what is revealed was this: sixty per cent of the couples living together in that particular area were married neither with benefit of clergy nor by representative of the state. And the city in question was in a State that did not permit common law marriages. Shocking, to be sure. And yet, what else

can one expect in a civilization that deliberately preaches a philosophy of irrestraint; that gives the flesh precedence over the heart, the animal instinct over human sentiment; that dethrones reason and enthrones voluptuousness.

Not strikingly different from artificial birth control is sterilization. Indeed, the latter is one of the methods of birth control. Like contraception generally, it separates sex or physical love from procreation. It is not at all surprising therefore that the sterilization movement gained momentum in the United States with the growth of contraception. Dr. Paul Popenoe tells us that its voluntary use has become more common than is generally recognized. Its compulsory use in certain cases of the so-called unfit, we know, has been upheld by the Supreme Court of the United States. According to a number of state laws, also, sterilization is compulsory. Implying as it does an unwarranted maiming of the human body, both voluntary and compulsory sterilization is morally wrong.

Incidentally, compulsory sterilization leaves the door wide ajar to totalitarianism. It places in the hands of the state the power to control procreation.

Other practices mentioned in this chapter also tend to enhance the power of the state to a dangerous degree. They tend to kill the family sense more and more. And, invariably, as the prestige of the family wanes, the influence of the State grows. Under the circumstances the child comes to be viewed increasingly as a creature of the State and less and less as a creature of the parents. The state increasingly assumes the right of control over him. Usually it begins by controlling his education. Eventually it even seeks to control his very existence; that is, it assumes, as it actually has done under the compulsory sterilization laws, the right to control births. The State in other words becomes the very reason for the child's existence. Thus it is a matter that can augur no possible good for the fundamental rights and liberties of a people.

Some Things New and Old

JUGOSLAV PRIESTS

How is the Catholic Church functioning now in Jugoslavia? I am informed that the Catholic clergy are proscribed in that country.

According to the latest information reaching us, in the single Diocese of Ljubljana (Laibach) which contains 143 parishes, only four Catholic priests are allowed to remain at their posts.

The Catholic population of the Diocese consists of some 205,000 souls. And of these four priests, three of them are permitted to bury the dead, baptize and hear confessions. The fourth priest is forbidden to enter his own church at all. And none of the four priests is permitted to teach the catechism in his parish school.

The Diocese of Maribor consists of 256 parishes, with 430 secular clergy and 109 priests belonging to the religious orders. These clergy ministered to a total population of some 653,000 souls.

Of these 539 priests, about 36 Slovene clergy are permitted to carry out their priestly ministry, and only in the parish consigned to them. Some of the priests are prisoners in internment camps; others have been forbidden by the secular authorities to exercise their ministry at all.

To get a clear idea of how the Catholic Church is suffering in Slovenia, you cannot do better than read the pamphlet *The Martyrdom of Slovenia* published by The America Press.

CROATIA AND THE HOLY SEE

Is it a fact that the Holy See has entered into diplomatic relations with the newly-created State of Croatia? I have read in the press that this is so.

No, the Holy See has not entered into new diplomatic

relations with any country or state that has been conquered or invaded by an enemy, or with any government forced upon any such country or state. During October 1942 reports were circulated that the Vatican had sent a diplomatic representative to the puppet Croat State that was created by the invader. There is not a word of truth in these reports.

On October 13, 1942, Radio Vatican broadcast a statement that no diplomatic relations exist between the Holy See and the new puppet State of Croatia; and Radio Vatican always makes certain of its facts before going on the air.

According to the Vatican broadcast, Prince Lobkovitch, one of the chamberlains of the Papal household, was appointed to the position of private confidential representative for religious interests in Croatia. In addition to the Vatican representative for religious interests generally in Croatia, the Holy See has a special representative who is accredited immediately to the Croatian episcopate. This is the Right Reverend Dom Joseph Marcone, O.S.B., Abbot of Monte Vergine.

These are purely religious interests and, as Radio Vatican points out, no diplomatic relations have been established between the Holy See and the puppet State of Croatia.

RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

Why is the Roman Catholic Church opposed to religious freedom and the tolerance of other religious bodies which do not profess the religion of that Church?

If by religious toleration you mean the popular idea that one religion is as good as another, then the Catholic Church certainly does not accept that idea. Indeed, the Protestant Churches do not accept it either. If they did, there would be less wrangling and controversy among the sects.

But the Catholic Church claims to be the Church

founded by Jesus Christ, and since Jesus Christ is God—and almost every one of the non-Catholic sects admit that—then the Catholic Church cannot, for the sake of integrity, agree that religious bodies which either deny or repudiate the age-old teachings of the Church are the same as the Church which has preserved the Deposit of the Faith.

Here is a case in point. Jesus Christ, the Founder of the Church, said: "He who believes and is baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be condemned." (Mark. xvi, 16). Very well, what sort of tolerance can you expect the Catholic Church, which received the Faith from Christ through the Apostles, to feel towards any religious sect which either denies the efficacy of Baptism or rejects that Sacrament altogether?

As to the Catholic Church being opposed to religious freedom, by which you probably mean that any man or woman accepts the tenets of any religious body as these tenets seem true to him or her, the Church does no such thing. Faith is the gift of God, and if any person has not the Faith, then he or she hasn't it. There are numerous persons outside the Church who are in a condition of invincible ignorance of what the Church actually teaches. If they are ignorant, then they are justified in following whatsoever religious light they may have. The Church has no plan to force them to believe the Catholic Faith if they cannot comprehend it. All the same, it is the mission of the Church to go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every living soul. The Catholic Church has itself suffered too much from religious intolerance to wish to use such action towards those outside the Fold.

The Catholic Mind

INDEX TO VOLUME XL

January 8 to December 22, 1942

Agriculture:

Farmer and Social Reconstruction, The.....p. 9, Mar. 22/42

American Credo:

Our American Credo.....p. 24, Feb. 8/42

Americas:

Security and Concord of the Americas.....p. 13, Feb. 22/42

Antichrist:

Antichristp. 31, June 8/42

Anti-Nazism:

Christian Resistance, The.....p. 19, Nov. 8/42

Christians at Bay.....p. 6, Aug. 8/42

d'Argenlieu, Admiral:

Admiral d'Argenlieup. 29, Sept. 8/42

Atheism:

Russian Resistance to Atheism, The.....p. 11, Mar. 8/42

Australia:

Australian Catholic Rural Movementp. 16, Oct. 8/42

Austria:

Austrian Archbishop's Pastoral Letter on

Religious Instructionp. 20, June 8/42

Belgium:

Belgium Fights On.....p. 1, Nov. 22/42

Birth Control:

Do We Want Birth Control?.....p. 17, Sept. 8/42

Twenty-five Years of Uncontrolp. 7, Dec. 22/42

Bishops:

- Consecration of a Coptic Bishop..... p. 24, Sept. 22/42
Jesuit Bishops p. 31, Oct. 22/42

Blessed Virgin:

- Our Lady of Fatima p. 29, June 22/42
Russia and Our Lady..... p. 29, Sept. 22/42

Books:

- Forbidden Books p. 30, Dec. 8/42

Bolshevism:

- This Bolshevism Business p. 1, Apr. 8/42

Brazil:

- Vargas of Brazil..... p. 15, Sept. 22/42

Brothers:

- Peter Claver Brothers..... p. 30, May 8/42

Bruno, Giordano:

- Giordano Bruno p. 29, Dec. 8/42

Byzantine Cross:

- Byzantine Cross, The..... p. 5, Mar. 8/42

Canada:

- French Canada and the War..... p. 1, Dec. 8/42

Capitalism:

- Does Capitalism Want War?..... p. 11, Oct. 22/42

Cathedral Chapters:

- Cathedral Chapters p. 31, Jan. 22/42

Catholic Action:

- Action for God p. 1, Aug. 22/42

Catholicism:

- Catholicism and the Present Crisis..... p. 9, Nov. 8/42
Catholicism vs. Nazism p. 20, May 22/42
Catholics in World of Tomorrow..... p. 25, Jan. 22/42
Political Catholicism p. 1, Feb. 22/42

Chaplains:

- Irish Military Chaplains..... p. 32, Feb. 22/42

China:

Message to America p. 7, Dec. 8/42

Christian Cooperation:

Joint Statement on Christian Cooperation p. 23, Aug. 22/42

Christian Science:

Christian Science p. 31, July 22/42

Church, The:

Church and the Jews, The p. 1, Apr. 22/42

Church, Democracy and the War, The p. 14, Apr. 22/42

Church's Social Mission, The p. 1, July 22/42

Dioceses of the Church p. 28, July 8/42

Lepers and the Church p. 30, Mar. 8/42

Pacifism and the Church p. 29, Nov. 22/42

Persecution of the Church in Germany p. 1, July 8/42

Titular Churches p. 31, July 8/42

Civic Responsibility:

Religion and Civic Responsibility p. 1, Jan. 22/42

Communion of Saints:

Communion of Saints p. 30, Apr. 8/42

Communism:

Pope Pius XI on Communism and Nazism p. 21, Jan. 8/42

Conscience:

Neutrality and the International Conscience p. 6, June 22/42

Converts:

Jewish Converts p. 30, Feb. 8/42

Conversion of the Jews p. 10, Feb. 22/42

Coptic Liturgy:

Consecration of a Coptic Bishop p. 24, Sept. 22/42

Corpus Christi:

Corpus Christi p. 31, Sept. 22/42

Creation:

Evolution or Creation p. 31, May 8/42

Croatia:

Croatia and the Holy See p. 17, Dec. 22/42

Dark Ages:

Dark Ages p. 30, Sept. 8/42

Democracy:

Church, Democracy and the War, The p. 14, Apr. 22/42

Economic Democracy p. 13, Aug. 22/42

Economics:

Credit Unions p. 23, Mar. 22/42

Economic Democracy p. 13, Aug. 22/42

Economic Factors in Latin America p. 14, May 22/42

Evading the Loan Sharks p. 24, June 22/42

Just Wage p. 31, Oct. 8/42

Ten Points, The p. 24, Oct. 22/42

Wealth Out of Poverty p. 20, Oct. 22/42

Will the War Decimate the Middle Class? p. 16, Aug. 8/42

Education:

Character Aim in Education, The p. 23, Apr. 22/42

Education for Total Life p. 1, Aug. 8/42

Eire:

Exiles of Erin p. 24, Sept. 8/42

Nation in Decay p. 5, Dec. 22/42

Errors:

Some Present Day Errors p. 8, July 8/42

Ethics:

Totalitarian Ethics and Intellectual Freedom p. 19, Mar. 8/42

Eucharist:

Eucharistic Fast p. 32, Oct. 8/42

Eucharistic Study Enjoined p. 29, June 8/42

Holy Communion in Hawaii p. 1, Mar. 8/42

Nocturnal Communions Within Sound of

Gestapo Sentry's Footsteps p. 19, Aug. 8/42

Evolution:

Evolution or Creation p. 31, May 8/42

Ex Cathedra:

Ex Cathedra p. 31, Feb. 22/42

Family, The:

Mother and Home in the Post-War World p. 26, Nov. 8/42

Ferro, Antonio:

Antonio Ferro: Mouthpiece of a Prophet p. 18, Nov. 22/42

Forty Hours:

Forty Hours Devotion p. 23, Dec. 8/42

Four Freedoms:

Four Freedoms, The p. 20, Sept. 22/42

France:

France Looks Oversea p. 10, Nov. 22/42

Jeanne d'Arc and the Spirit of France p. 16, Aug. 22/42

Laval and the Man Who Brought Him Back p. 24, June 8/42

Germany:

Bishop Von Galen Defies Hitler p. 1, Dec. 22/42

German Priests and the Nazi Party p. 17, Jan. 22/42

Joint Pastoral Letter of the German Hierarchy p. 1, Feb. 8/42

Leave the Church? Thrice No! p. 1, May 8/42

Nazi Destruction of Christian Marriage p. 26, May 8/42

Old Reich and the New, The p. 11, Dec. 8/42

Persecution of the Church in Germany p. 1, July 8/42

Program for New Germany, A p. 17, June 22/42

Youth in Nazi Germany p. 12, May 8/42

Gestapo:

Nocturnal Communions Within Sound of Gestapo

Sentry's Footsteps p. 19, Aug. 8/42

Ghosts:

Ghosts p. 30, Aug. 8/42

Greece:

Starvation of Greece, The.....p. 9, Aug. 22/42

Heresy:

Fighting Heresyp. 15, Apr. 8/42

Heresy and Schism.....p. 31, Sept. 8/42

Heroes:

Catholic Sea Heroes.....p. 30, Aug. 22/42

History:

Unscientific Historyp. 14, Nov. 8/42

Holland:

Dutch Bishops' Pastoral Warning Against Nazified

Labor Servicep. 27, Aug. 22/42

Holy Ghost:

Rushing, Mighty Wind, A.....p. 24, Aug. 8/42

Indulgences:

Radio Indulgencep. 29, Feb. 22/42

Inquisition:

Inquisitionp. 29, Oct. 22/42

Good Word for the Inquisition, A.....p. 1, Sept. 22/42

Irish, The:

Exiles of Erin.....p. 24, Sept. 8/42

Irish Catholic Presidents.....p. 32, July 22/42

Irish Military Chaplains.....p. 32, Feb. 22/42

Japan:

Japanese State Idolatry.....p. 19, July 22/42

Java:

Java Catholicsp. 29, Apr. 8/42

Jesuits:

Jacquinet de Besange.....p. 30, July 22/42

Jesuit Bishopsp. 31, Oct. 22/42

Jesuit "Monks"p. 28, Feb. 22/42

Jesuit Pupilsp. 31, Feb. 8/42

Jews:

- Catholic Approach to the Jews, A p. 1, Sept. 8/42
 Church and the Jews, The p. 1, Apr. 22/42
 Conversion of the Jews p. 10, Feb. 22/42
 Jewish Converts p. 30, Feb. 8/42

Jugoslavia:

- Jugoslav Priests p. 17, Dec. 22/42

Jurisdiction:

- Jurisdiction and Rank p. 29, Mar. 8/42

Latin America:

- Economic Factors in Latin America p. 14, May 22/42
 Security and Concord of the Americas p. 13, Feb. 22/42

Law:

- International Law and Sovereignty p. 30, June 8/42
 Unity of the Threefold Law, The p. 1, Nov. 8/42

Lepers:

- Lepers and the Church p. 30, Mar. 8/42

Man:

- Peaceful Man, The p. 28, Apr. 8/42
 State and the Rights of Man, The p. 25, Apr. 8/42

Margaret of Savoy:

- Margaret of Savoy p. 31, Nov. 22/42

Maronites:

- Maronites p. 31, Apr. 8/42

Marriage:

- Nazi Destruction of Christian Marriage p. 26, May 8/42

Martyrs:

- Uganda Martyrs p. 30, Feb. 22/42

Mass:

- Evening Mass p. 31, Nov. 8/42
 Mass in Queer Places, The p. 27, Aug. 8/42
 Sacrifice p. 20, Oct. 8/42

Materialism:

Consistent Materialism p. 26, Feb. 8/42

Missions:

Mandalay p. 32, June 22/42
 Need of Native Priests in Missions, The p. 27, Jan. 8/42
 Oceania Missions p. 32, Apr. 22/42
 War Work of the Missions p. 28, Sept. 22/42

Native Clergy:

Need of Native Priests in Missions, The p. 27, Jan. 8/42

Natural Law:

An Age of Opinion p. 28, Oct. 8/42

Nazism:

Catholicism vs. Nazism p. 20, May 22/42
 German Priests and the Nazi Party p. 17, Jan. 22/42
 Nazi Contribution to Peace, The p. 25, Nov. 22/42
 Pope Pius XI on Communism and Nazism p. 21, Jan. 8/42

Netherlands East Indies:

Netherlands East Indies p. 30, July 8/42

Neutrality:

Neutrality and the International Conscience p. 6, June 22/42

New World Order:

Catholics in World of Tomorrow p. 25, Jan. 22/42
 History of Present Dilemmas p. 15, Oct. 22/42
 Principles of War p. 9, Oct. 8/42
 Program for New Germany, The p. 17, June 22/42
 When Victory Comes p. 1, Oct. 8/42
 World We Desire to Create, The p. 1, May 22/42

Pacifism:

Pacifism and the Church p. 29, Nov. 22/42

Pantheism:

Pantheism p. 31, Apr. 22/42

Papacy:

Croatia and the Holy See	p. 17, Dec. 22/42
Holy Office	p. 30, Nov. 22/42
Papal Jubilee Privilege	p. 31, Aug. 22/42
Papal Nationality	p. 32, May 22/42
Papal Plan for Social Reconstruction, The	p. 1, Mar. 22/42
Pontifical Academy of Sciences	p. 30, Mar. 22/42
Rome and Russia	p. 29, Oct. 8/42

Pastorals:

Austrian Archbishop's Pastoral Letter on Religious Instruction	p. 20, June 8/42
Dutch Bishops' Pastoral Warning Against Nazified Labor Service	p. 27, Aug. 22/42
Joint Pastoral Letter of the German Hierarchy	p. 1, Feb. 8/42
Persecution of the Church in Germany	p. 1, July 8/42
Some Present Day Errors	p. 8, July 8/42

Patriarchs:

Patriarchs	p. 31, Mar. 22/42
------------------	-------------------

Patron Saints:

Aviators' Patron	p. 30, Aug. 22/42
------------------------	-------------------

Peace:

Future World Peace	p. 1, Jan. 8/42
Nazi Contribution to Peace, The	p. 25, Nov. 22/42
Peace Prayer of Benedict XV	p. 30, Sept. 22/42
Pius XII and Peace Aims	p. 6, July 22/42

Persecution:

Christians at Bay	p. 6, Aug. 8/42
Leave the Church? Thrice No!	p. 1, May 8/42
Nocturnal Communion Within Sound of Gestapo Sentry's Footsteps	p. 19, Aug. 8/42
Persecution of the Church in Germany	p. 1, July 8/42
Polish Bishops Interned	p. 32, Nov. 8/42

War Without Arms p. 1, Oct. 22/42

Philippines:

Philippine Apostles p. 32, Oct. 22/42

Poland:

Polish Bishops Interned p. 32, Nov. 8/42

Popes, The:

Leo XIII p. 31, June 22/42

Martyr Popes p. 32, Sept. 8/42

Peace Prayer of Benedict XV p. 30, Sept. 22/42

Pius XII and Peace Aims p. 6, July 22/42

Pope Pius XI on Communism and Nazism p. 21, Jan. 8/42

Pope Pius XII's Plea to Warring Nations p. 1, June 8/42

Why Doesn't the Pope Do Something? p. 15, Feb. 8/42

Why the Pope Is Neutral p. 26, Dec. 8/42

Portugal:

Antonio Ferro: Mouthpiece of a Prophet p. 18, Nov. 22/42

Prayer:

First Things First p. 19, Dec. 8/42

Is Prayer Poetry? p. 27, Mar. 8/42

Prejudice:

Race Prejudice p. 6, May 22/42

Race Prejudice and Realism p. 10, Feb. 8/42

Press, The

Deadly Parallel Bludgeons Press p. 22, Aug. 22/42

Journalism's Three Chief Devils p. 22, July 8/42

Privileged Altar:

Papal Jubilee Privilege p. 31, Aug. 22/42

Propaganda:

War Correspondents and Propaganda p. 9, Jan. 22/42

Racism:

Contemporary Racism in America p. 20, Feb. 22/42

Race Prejudice p. 6, May 22/42

Race Prejudice and Realism p. 10, Feb. 8/42

Red Cross:

Red Cross p. 30, Oct. 8/42

Reform:

Religion and Reform p. 26, July 22/42

Religion:

Religion and Civic Responsibility p. 1, Jan. 22/42

Religion and Reform p. 26, July 22/42

Religious Instruction:

Austrian Archbishop's Pastoral Letter on Religious
Instruction p. 20, June 8/42

Religious Orders:

Religious Orders p. 32, July 8/42

Retreats:

Presbyterian Retreat House, A p. 23, Dec. 8/42

Revolution:

Revolution or Conspiracy? p. 12, Sept. 22/42

Roman Collar:

Roman Collar p. 29, Apr. 8/42

Rural Life:

Australian Catholic Rural Movement p. 16, Oct. 8/42

Russia:

Rome and Russia p. 29, Oct. 8/42

Russian Resistance to Atheism, The p. 11, Mar. 8/42

Russia and Our Lady p. 29, Sept. 22/42

Youth in Soviet Russia p. 8, Apr. 8/42

Sacraments:

Sacraments p. 30, Nov. 8/42

Satan:

Satan p. 30, Oct. 22/42

Scapular:

Scapular of Carmel p. 31, May 22/42

Schism:

Heresy and Schism..... p. 31, Sept. 8/42

Science:

Pontifical Academy of Sciences..... p. 30, Mar. 22/42

Social Action:

Church's Social Mission, The..... p. 1, July 22/42

Conscientious but Unconscious Catholics..... p. 20, Dec. 8/42

Social Reconstruction:

Farmer and Social Reconstruction, The..... p. 9, Mar. 22/42

Labor and Social Reconstruction..... p. 16, Mar. 22/42

Papal Plan for Social Reconstruction, The..... p. 1, Mar. 22/42

Social Reconstruction and Legislation..... p. 5, Nov. 22/42

Spain:

Some Present Day Errors..... p. 8, July 8/42

Spiritism:

Communication With the Dead..... p. 30, June 22/42

Spiritism and the Church..... p. 32, Mar. 8/42

State:

Japanese State Idolatry..... p. 19, July 22/42

State and the Rights of Man, The..... p. 25, Apr. 8/42

Statistics:

Jesuit Pupils..... p. 31, Feb. 8/42

Religious Statistics in U. S..... p. 30, Jan. 22/42

Treaties:

Anglo-Soviet Treaty, The..... p. 13, Sept. 8/42

Vargas, President Getulio:

Vargas of Brazil..... p. 15, Sept. 22/42

Vocations:

Influences in Our Schools Unfavorable to Religious

Vocations..... p. 1, June 22/42

War, The:

Catholicism and the Present Crisis..... p. 9, Nov. 8/42

Church, Democracy and the War, The	p. 14, Apr. 22/42
French Canada and the War	p. 1, Dec. 8/42
History of Present Dilemmas	p. 15, Oct. 22/42
Pope's Plea to Warring Nations	p. 1, June 8/42
Principles of War	p. 9, Oct. 8/42
Soldier's Code of Chivalry, The	p. 26, Oct. 22/42
War Without Arms	p. 1, Oct. 22/42
Why Doesn't the Pope Do Something?	p. 15, Feb. 8/42

Youth:

Catholic Youth Apostolate Outline	p. 26, Mar. 22/42
Youth in Nazi Germany	p. 12, May 8/42
Youth in Soviet Russia	p. 8, Apr. 8/42

2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2
2

2
2
2